

F A R O C O M M U N I Q U É



Image from Chloé Mazzani puppet show. Photo: Stephan Lefranc.

The emerging dynamic of Faro 'networks'

Summary of comments made by Francesc Pla

Coffee Talk #18 explored how to implement national approaches – part of an objective proposed at the Viscari network meeting for the 2025 Faro action plan related to support for local, regional and national approaches. The Faro Convention Network faces varying constraints and challenges across different levels of implementation. That is why it is important to look at the evolution of initiatives at national and regional level. Some years ago, this work was initiated in Italy where there was an ecology of networking and support for groups to implement the Faro principles.

The common aim was to involve more people. More recently, in the Netherlands, the work emerged as direct support for wider stakeholder adoption of the Faro Convention. In Spain, the focus is to mobilise regional stakeholders whereas in the Francophone case it is self-organised and managed. What we learn is that process has to be tailored nationally, flexible and responsive to circumstances.

For the Council of Europe the main challenge is to find concrete ways to maintain the dynamics of these networks through physical or online actions.

FARO ITALY NETWORK: RETE FARO ITALIA

Luisella Pavan

Historical Context, Origin and Characteristics:

- Network established in Venice with support from the local Council of Europe office
- Development of an inclusive network connecting heritage communities through thematic approaches
- Heritage communities aligning with Faro principles, both knowingly and unknowingly
- Strong partnerships with cultural institutions
- Adoption of Faro Convention into Italian law in 2020
- Collaboration with Ministry of Culture and FSBAC on heritage communities inventory

Network Structure and Activities:

- Biannual meetings established, nine sessions completed
- Management transferred to CNR Naples, developing Faro Self Assessment indicators (2020)
- Thematic seminars alongside annual meetings:
 - Role of museums, archives, and libraries (Rome, October 2024)
 - Urban renewal and Faro implementation (Alessandria, May 2024)
 - Funding cultural activities (Rome and Venice, 2023)
- Publication of "Defending together Europe's cultural heritage" (Pavan-Woolfe, 2023)

Key Challenges for Expansion and Operations Constraints:

- Integrating work with FSBAC inventory
- Expanding membership
- Limited financial resources
- Inconsistent Cultural Ministry engagement
- Limited communication with Council of Europe Faro Convention Network

Network Achievements:

- Translated materials into Italian
- Integrated website with Venice Council of Europe office
- Organized over 100 annual heritage walks, mostly by Network members

Facebook Website You Tube

FARO NETWORKING IN SPAIN

Extracts from input by Silvia Rodríguez-Bermejo, Cultural Ministry, Spain.

Spain's cultural landscape is characterized by 17 autonomous regions with significant self-governance in cultural heritage, as highlighted in a recent ministerial presentation. The Ministry of Culture has been strategically working to implement the Faro Convention, organizing annual meetings to enhance understanding across regions.

Since 2022, the ministry has hosted key gatherings for Heads of Culture, initially uncovering a low level of awareness about the Faro Convention. These meetings were designed to present the convention not as an administrative burden, but as a collaborative framework to strengthen local cultural initiatives. During the Spanish Presidency of the EU, a significant meeting addressed three primary priorities: Council of Europe Heritage Routes, the European Commission Heritage Label, and the Faro Convention. The gathering was notable for prominently featuring non-institutional cultural stakeholders, demonstrating an inclusive approach to cultural heritage management.

A third meeting in Melilla in 2023, which coincided with the IWAFEST celebrating cultural diversity, included a local tour that showcased citizen-led cultural heritage restoration. During this event, the ministry also presented its 16 state-owned museums, with a particular focus on work related to diversity, gender equality, and non-discrimination.

The ministry's current projects include developing intangible heritage initiatives, such as preserving traditional practices like esparto grass use in rural communities. There are plans to continue annual meetings involving regional and local stakeholders, with Faro Convention principles to be discussed during Heritage Council meetings.

Translation efforts are ongoing, with the Faro Brochure already translated and additional publications about the convention's role in a changing society currently being prepared.

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FARO ITALY PLATFORM

Francesco Calzolaio

Historical Context, Origin and Characteristics:

- A digital platform developed in Italy to promote inclusive, self-evaluating heritage initiatives
- In 2021, following Italy's adoption of the Faro Convention into national law, the Council of Europe provided initial funding for the platform
- The platform engages new heritage communities that embrace the Faro Convention principles
- It focuses on thematic and territorial approaches to connect heritage communities

Network Structure and Activities:

- Heritage communities develop through collaborations across regions. **READ**
- Learning on narrating the heritage of the communities with the contribute of several high schools in many regions: www.faroitaliaplatform.it/learning
- Network conferences held in 2024:
 - Faro Memorie della guerra (Turin, May)
 - Faro Muri e Paesaggio (Gemona, July)
 - Faro Cratere (Amandola, June; Caldarola, November)
 - Faro Transumanza (Teramo, December)

Key Challenges for Expansion:

- Integration of heritage communities' work with the digital platform
- Strengthening engagement with public institutions
- Growing the network of heritage communities in size and quality
- Improving communication of platform tools and networking opportunities
- Managing the balance of heritage communities' and public financial resources

Network Achievements:

- Interactive digital map featuring over 140 incorporated heritage communities
- Comprehensive FAQ resource available at faroitaliaplatform.it/faq
- Established memoranda of understanding for thematic networks, accessible at faroitaliaplatform.it/protocollo

Network Links: www.faroitaliaplatform.it, [facebook](#), [blog](#)

Faro Convention in the Netherlands

Machteld Linssen

The task is to build a collaborative heritage community. Machteld Linssen from the Netherlands' Cultural Heritage Agency shares how her country is revolutionizing cultural heritage engagement. The Dutch approach centers on a dynamic, inclusive network that brings together diverse stakeholders—from policymakers and museum professionals to volunteers and community representatives.

Rather than top-down decision-making, the Netherlands took a unique path. They invited everyone interested in heritage to explore the Faro Convention's meaning through open debates, research, and local dialogues. After three years of collaborative work, the heritage sector itself drafted an agenda for more democratic and inclusive heritage practices.

By 2023, the network had grown to over 2,000 newsletter subscribers and 1,000 active online platform members. A participatory grant system allows network members to co-create and refine project proposals, with special emphasis on reaching underrepresented communities.

The approach has been remarkably successful. A recent survey showed that 81% of Dutch municipalities now know the Faro Convention, with 38% already incorporating its principles into local policies. Even before national ratification in January 2024, the convention's values are influencing how the Netherlands thinks about heritage.

Key to their success is creating a flexible, welcoming space where diverse voices can connect, learn, and drive meaningful change in how society understands and preserves its cultural legacy.

FARO DIGITAL

On this platform, everyone interested in cultural heritage can discuss the Faro Convention and the process towards signing it. This is a process of, by and for the broad heritage field. The principles of the Faro Convention are explored by way of conversations and exchanges. [READ](#)

THE RIGHT TO HERITAGE

The 'right to heritage' is one of the most important principles in the Faro Convention. What does this mean? A number of people from the Faro network recorded a video about this and the responses are in Dutch [WATCH](#)

WORK DONE

In 2023 and 2024, a total of 46 initiatives have been chosen that are eligible for a financial contribution from the Faro Agenda. [READ](#)



Berlin.CollectiveCreature. Photo: Sebastian Díaz

FRANCOPHILE NETWORK

Prosper Wanner

Background:

The francophone network welcomes individuals (natural and legal entities) and organizations in an informal, voluntary structure. Members contribute as co-learners, exchanging knowledge about implementing and interpreting Faro.

Purpose of the Francophone Faro network:

- Enhance participant relationships and cooperation
- Increase visibility of the Faro Convention in France
- Facilitate access to French-language resources on the Convention
- Promote knowledge transmission through training and studies
- Participation process involves individuals, professionals and members are those who participate in actions of the Faro Action Plan. Members join the Faro Action Plan through participation in activities, either by invitation from current participants or by contacting the French-speaking Faro network

Activities:

- Projects include a resources portal, national coordination group, Faro training, annual meetings, appreciation visits and a Faro handbook. **READ**

FARO CONVENTION NETWORK NEWS



*METs Michaela Türk at a local celebration of the Europa Nostra Awards in Alma Vii.
Photo: MET website*

WISHING PEACE

To our entire Faro Network community and friends, we send our hope for peace in all corners of our world."

Faro Network Assembly Meeting

Bucarest, 9/10 October 2024

The Faro Network attended the Europa Nostra Bucharest awards where our member, Mihai Eminescu Trust, won three awards. MET received the Conservation and Adaptive Reuse, Grand Prix Award and Public Choice Award for restoring the Saxon Church & fortified complex in Alma Vii. The next day, Michaela Türk, Director for Implementation and Development, presented stakeholders at Alma vii, Siberiu.

Next year is Faro's 20th anniversary with events planned, including in Faro, Portugal. Cooperativa Sociale La Paranza (Naples) and Museum of Madness (Slovenia) are now proposed as members of Faro Network.

EU PROJECT WORK

Work has begun to resubmit the Fro-Labs-Network: Cultivating Heritage with Civic Engagement, an Erasmus + has started the process of resubmitting the application in 2025. The EU CERV Citizens Remembrance application SOUNDINGS was rejected for funding and an appeal process is not underway. was stor and contribute to a Union of Equality.



COFFEE TALKS FOCUS ON BELARUS AND UKRAINE

At the Europa Nostra awards in Bucarest, we met Tetyana Oliynyk and agreed to make Coffee Talk #17 dedicated to Ukraine. [LISTEN](#)

It follows from our dedicated Coffee Talk #16 with Stsiapan Stureika, European Humanities University on Belarus. [LISTEN](#)

ICAF OPEN CALL FOR IDEAS

For the March 2026 Edition of the Festival (our 10th Edition!) the theme chosen is: SPACE FOR IMAGINATION. The festival organisers are curious about community arts projects that work with artistic, aesthetic spaces in inspiring, innovative, and/or impactful ways. We actively invite projects that create space(s) for imagination or depart from the theme 'space for imagination'.

[READ THE CALL](#)

[SUBMIT IDEA](#)

